



# News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Martin O'Malley  
Governor

Anthony G. Brown  
Lt. Governor

Gary D. Maynard  
Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mark Vernarelli 410 339-5065  
Bill Jewell 301 729 7255

## **Toys Made By WCI Inmates Donated to Garrett Mentors, Inc.**

TOWSON, MD (December 10, 2008)---Wooden toys made by wheelchair-using inmates at Western Correctional Institution (WCI) were donated today to Garrett Mentors, Inc. The Oakland-based mentoring program will give the toys to kids at a Christmas party this week.

"This is a wonderful way to give back to the community, and a way to engage men whose disabilities and medical conditions might otherwise limit their ability to perform other jobs," says WCI's Assistant Warden Dr. Harry Murphy, Jr. who oversees the program. WCI has more than forty inmates who use wheelchairs.

Using wood donated by 84 Lumber in LaVale, the inmates crafted planes, trains, trucks, and other toys. The pilot project will be expanded in the near future to involve more inmates and other nonprofits. Assistant Warden Murphy is also in the process of identifying other inmate projects that would benefit children with medical disabilities and other good causes.

Tricia Cheesman of Garrett Mentors, Inc. came to the prison this afternoon to pick up the toys and expressed gratitude to both the staff and inmates. His nonprofit provides important mentoring services to Garrett County children in grades K-5.

WCI, under the leadership of Warden Bobby Shearin, has long been a significant contributor to communities throughout Western Maryland, and prides itself on good relations with its neighbors and nonprofits. Programs like this toy-making effort allow inmates to learn skills, reduce idleness, and give back to the society they harmed.

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